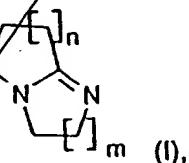


in the presence of a basic [catalysts] catalyst at from -20 to 200°C to form [β -alkoxynitriles] a β -alkoxynitrile, and

- b) subsequent hydrogenation of the [β -alkoxynitriles] β -alkoxynitrile in the presence of a hydrogenation catalyst, without prior removal or neutralization of said basic catalyst.

which [comprises] consists essentially of using in the first step a diazabicycloalkene catalyst of the formula I



where from 1 to 4 hydrogen atoms on the diazabicycloalkene nucleus may be independently replaced by the radicals R¹ to R⁴, in which case R¹, R², R³ and R⁴ are each C₁₋₂₀-alkyl, C₆₋₂₀-aryl or C₇₋₂₀-arylalkyl, and

n and m are each an integer from 1 to 6, and effecting the hydrogenation in the second step at from 50 to 250°C in the presence of a hydrogenation catalyst and of the catalyst of the formula I.

REMARKS

The amendments to claim 6 suggested or required by the examiner have been made. The rejection under 35 USC 112 has thus been rendered moot.